



Arizona Early Childhood Task Force

Arizona Early Childhood Model System

Vision

All Arizona children by the time they are five years old have a solid foundation for success in school and in life because we have worked together to create a family centered, comprehensive, collaborative, and high quality early childhood system that addresses the child's development, health, and early education.

The Child

The early childhood system addresses the child's:

- Development (Physical, Cognitive, Speech and Language, and Social-Emotional)
- Health (Physical, Mental, Oral, Nutritional)
- Early Education

System Partners

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arizona's young children and their families • Arizona communities, including Tribal communities • Faith-based communities and their programs • Community health organizations and providers including physicians, nurses, dentists and therapists • Early care and education organizations and providers, including those who provide early intervention and address special needs • Family support organizations and providers, including home visitors • Public and private transportation organizations and providers • K-12 educators and administrators • Those who educate providers, including colleges and universities • Researchers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community agencies • Foundations/philanthropy • Advocacy organizations • Policy makers at the federal, state and local levels • State agencies, notably First Things First and its Regional Councils, Department of Economic Security, Department of Education, Department of Health Services and AHCCCS • Professional associations • Business community • Media • Elected Officials |
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System Elements

- Leadership
- Governance
- Adequate and secure funding
- Qualified and well-paid workforce
- Standards of practice and a means for monitoring them
- Needs/asset assessment, research/evaluation, and planning/development based on findings
- Technology support
- Public awareness and support
- Coordination among those involved in the early childhood system

System Characteristics

- *Child and family centered* – the system will focus on the child and family, recognize that each child and family is unique, and be developed and implemented in a manner that facilitates their engagement in the system; the system will be driven by Arizona’s families
- *Strength based* – the system will be built and implemented in a manner that identifies, builds on, and strengthens the many assets of Arizona’s children and families, their cultures, and their communities
- *Comprehensive* – the system will address all aspects of child development and health
- *Scalable* – the system can be implemented throughout the state and for all families, resources permitting
- *Outcome focused* – goals will be clear and measurable
- *Effective* – outcomes for children and families, as well as the functioning of the system, will be measured and desired results will be achieved
- *Accountable* – the system will be transparent, subject to ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and responsive to Arizona’s children, families, and the communities of which they are an integral part
- *Well funded* – resources that are adequate to support the development and implementation of the system will be dedicated to this purpose
- *Sustainable* – as the system is developed and implemented, consideration will be given to sustaining the system over time
- *Collaborative* – agencies at all levels, organizations, and individuals involved in the development, funding, implementation, and utilization of the system will help to design, evaluate, and continually improve it
- *High quality* – the system will be designed, developed, and implemented with recognition of lessons learned from research, evaluation, and experience; the system will seek to meet or exceed standards of good practice in all aspects
- *Inclusive and respectful* – the system will encompass all Arizona’s children and will honor their individuality while promoting their inclusion in the system
- *Equitable* – all children, families, and communities will be considered in the assessment of assets and needs and in systems planning and implementation
- *Flexible* – the system will change as conditions and requirements change
- *Clear* – while broad in scope and complex in undertaking, the system will be easy to understand and explain
- *Seamless* – the system will involve many agencies, organizations, and individuals who work together so that services, supports, and funding for them are well-articulated and wrap around the family in a coherent way
- *Community based* – like children and families, communities are unique; the system recognizes, supports, and builds on the key role communities play in early childhood development and health
- *Widely known* – Arizonans will have an accurate understanding of the system, how it works, and its goals
- *Publicly supported* – Arizonans will support public policies that foster early childhood development and health
- *Developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive* – the system will promote the creation of and support for services that address the unique needs and preferences of each child and family within the context of their culture and community
- *Available and accessible* to families – the system will encompass services and supports for families throughout Arizona and will function in a manner that overcomes barriers to utilization of these services and supports
- *Affordable* – the system will develop and provide services and supports that Arizona’s families can afford to access when they are needed
- *Innovative and Arizona specific* – the system envisioned will not be a replication of another system, but will incorporate lessons learned from others and be designed with an understanding of Arizona’s unique assets and conditions; it will be inspired by a commitment to Arizona’s children and families and serve as a model for other states

System Outcomes

Outcomes
All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education that promotes their optimal development.
All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care, including physical, mental, oral, and nutritional health.
All families have the information, services, and support they need to help their children achieve their fullest potential.
All early childhood education and health professionals are well prepared, highly skilled, and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.
The early childhood system is child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive.
All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and the impact of early childhood development and health on Arizona's economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood education and health both politically and financially.

System Outcomes & System Goals

Outcomes	Draft System Goals (based on the FTF Roadmap)
All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education that promotes their optimal development.	<p>There are sufficient numbers of high quality, affordable early care and education programs and settings statewide.</p> <p>Children and families have access to high quality, affordable programs where they live and work.</p> <p>Families have choices among part-day or full-day, part-year or year-round programs in a variety of settings.</p> <p>There are health, safety, and quality standards; support for attaining the standards; and a process for monitoring them.</p>
All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care, including physical, mental, oral, and nutritional health.	<p>There are sufficient numbers of high quality, affordable preventive and continuous health care services statewide.</p> <p>Children and families have access to high quality, affordable health care services.</p> <p>Health care for young children is coordinated via a medical and dental home.</p> <p>Early screening is provided to identify developmental delays and, if necessary, follow-up services are provided.</p>
All families have the information, services, and support they need to help their children achieve their fullest potential.	<p>There is high quality, diverse, and relevant information on the importance of the early years, child development, health, and early education available to all families.</p> <p>Information is available to families on the quality and availability of programs and services.</p> <p>There are high quality and diverse resources available to families to support their child's language and literacy development.</p>

Outcomes	Draft System Goals (based on the FTF Roadmap)
<p>All early childhood education and health professionals are well prepared, highly skilled, and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.</p>	<p>There are adequate numbers of early childhood professionals statewide.</p> <p>Early childhood professionals meet specified educational requirements.</p> <p>Early childhood professionals stay in the field.</p> <p>Early childhood professionals are paid commensurate with other fields requiring the similar education and experience.</p> <p>A sufficient number of health providers have specialized training to work with young children.</p>
<p>The early childhood system is child and family centered, coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive.</p>	<p>There is a clearly articulated process for coordinating state, federal, tribal, and local plans, programs, services, and resources related to early childhood development, health, and education.</p> <p>There is a coordinated process for collecting and utilizing accurate and relevant data related to early childhood development, health, and education.</p> <p>The early childhood system, programs, services, and resources are evaluated and results used to make improvements and guide future planning.</p>
<p>All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and the impact of early childhood development and health on Arizona's economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood education and health both politically and financially.</p>	<p>There is an ongoing communication and public awareness strategy in place for informing Arizonans about the importance of the early years and its impact on the state's economy and quality of life.</p> <p>Financial resources necessary to sustain the early childhood system are generated from public and private sources.</p>

The Role of First Things First

Outcomes	FTF Will:
All children have access to high quality, culturally responsive early care and education that promotes their optimal development.	
All children have access to high quality preventive and continuous health care, including physical, mental, oral, and nutritional health.	
All families have the information, services, and support they need to help their children achieve their fullest potential.	
All early childhood education and health professionals are well prepared, highly skilled, and compensated commensurate with their education and experience.	
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All Arizonans understand the importance of the early years and the impact of early childhood development and health on Arizona's economy and quality of life and, as a result, substantially support early childhood education and health both politically and financially.	